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*We provide children with a well rounded education in a safe, nurturing, inclusive environment,  
where everyone feels happy and respected, facilitating all to reach their full potential.*

## **POLICY ON ASSESSMENT**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Education Act (1998) requires schools to regularly evaluate students and periodically report the results of the valuation to the students and their parents. All members of staff were involved in developing, implementing and reviewing this assessment policy in October 2024 - June 2025

### **Why Assess?**

- Assessment helps to BUILD a picture of each learner, to prepare for intended learning and plan for appropriate learning experiences. (NCCA)
- Assessment enables teachers to ADAPT their teaching and to support learners in response to insights gathered during learning experiences. (NCCA)
- Assessment underpins teachers' preparation and planning of further learning experiences to extend and CONSOLIDATE all aspects of learning. (NCCA)

### **Primary Curriculum Framework (2023)**

The vision and principles on which the Primary Curriculum Framework (2023) is based place high-quality learning, teaching, and assessment at the heart of the curriculum. They combine to support children's learning. Teachers, as skilful and agentic professionals, enact the curriculum by making decisions about what to teach, when to teach it, and how to sequence and pace learning. This includes decisions about the specific learning experiences to be provided, shaped by the children's strengths, needs, interests, and individuality.

The framework's principles are

- teachers' knowledge of the children and their prior learning,
- knowledge of pedagogy, and knowledge of the curriculum as central components of high-quality learning and teaching. Knowledge of pedagogy begins with initial teacher education and evolves and deepens through reflection on practice, conversations with colleagues and continuing professional development.
- assessment: Knowledge of the children and their prior learning; Knowledge of the children includes the children as learners and as members of a family and community. This knowledge can be deepened through positive interactions, sharing relevant information on children's backgrounds, good relationships, and assessment.

### **Collaboration**

Positive interactions are central to supporting relationships with children and are important in getting to know children and their prior learning. The curriculum recognises the value of the full

**Chairperson: Mrs. Marie Doorly**

**Principal: Dr. Úna Feeley**

range of interactions between the teacher, colleagues and children (teacher/child, teacher/teacher, teacher/SET, teacher/SNA) – informal and formal, planned and incidental, social and cognitive - as contributing to a teacher's understanding of the child. The quality of these interactions impacts on children's learning, development, and wellbeing.

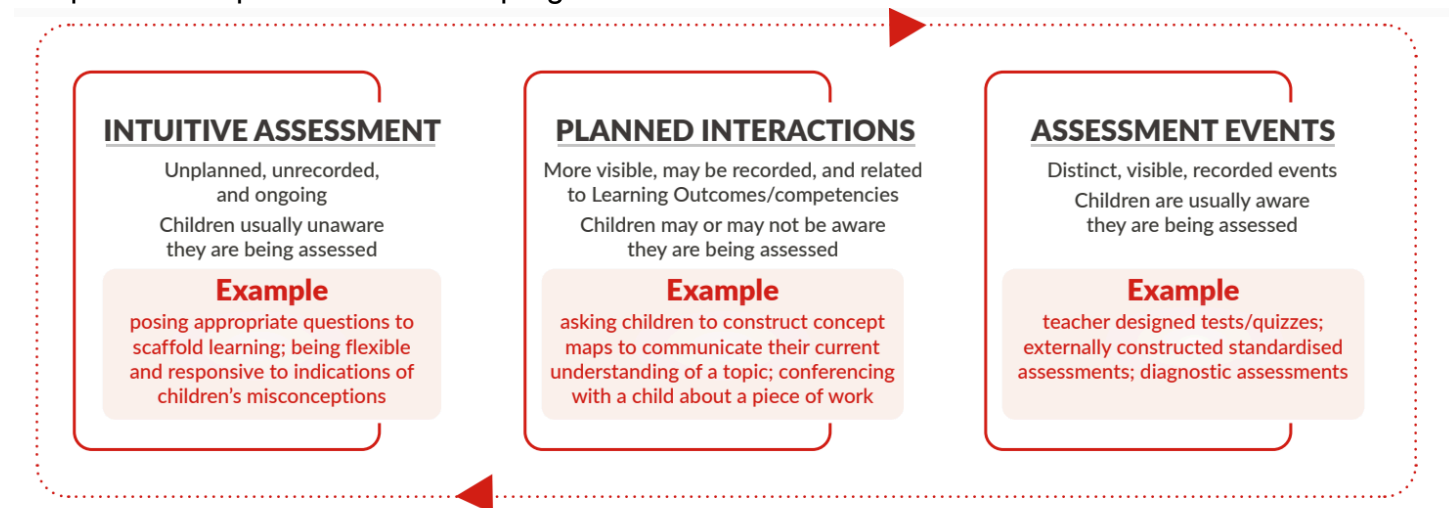
Assessment is a collaborative process providing information for various stakeholders, most important children, involving teachers, parents, support staff, school leaders and other professionals as they make decisions that will ultimately have a positive impact for children.

To facilitate the nurturing of relationships in the school community the following happens in St. Comán's Wood Primary School:

- Teachers' collaborative planning is time-tabled once every fortnight
- Mainstream and SET teachers who had the children the year previously meet with teachers who will have the children the following year in June/September to share information
- Daily, regular communication between staff happens via Google chat, email and in the staffroom. Parents can email teachers using their school email addresses and vice versa.
- Formal parent/teacher meetings are held in November of each year. Parents can meet teachers if they so wish by making an appointment through the office.
- For parents of children attending support outside the mainstream classroom, targets in the children's school support plans are shared/discussed and agreed by parents, teachers and pupils at the November parent/teacher meeting and reviewed at the end of each term as appropriate.
- The Principal/DP visits the pre-schools annually to speak to the directors of the pre-schools about new entrants' prior learning.
- Sixth class teachers meet with staff in the secondary schools to pass on information and knowledge about our sixth pupils to the forwarding second-level schools. A Passport Report moves with the child from 6th class to secondary school.
- Good relationships exist between staff and the public health nurse, NEPS, the Brothers of Charity, Jigsaw and HSE staff (psychologists, speech and language therapists, Occupational therapists etc.) While the support provided is limited and currently less than many of our children need, relationships are nurtured, advice is sought and every effort is made to acquire the support our children and families need.

### Assessment exists along a continuum

The curriculum supports a continuum of assessment ranging from 'intuitive' to 'planned interactions' and 'assessment events' as shown below from the "Primary Curriculum Framework" (2023). The three types of assessment are complementary, and necessary, to gain a comprehensive picture of a child's progress and achievement.



## Assessment Methods

Teachers continually assess children's knowledge, skills and dispositions. They are likely to use multiple assessment methods, in interchangeable ways, to build a rich picture of children's learning.



The following assessment modes/tools are used in **St. Comán's Wood Primary School**:

### Intuitive Assessment

- Teacher observation - teachers base their questioning on content objectives in all subject areas.
- Teacher questioning to scaffold learning
- Teacher /pupil conversations
- Brainstorming
- Peer collaboration
- Work samples - gives the child a chance to analyse their own work with a view to improving it, providing a continuum of progress. Portfolios/ Learning Logs.
- Playful approaches (concrete materials)

### Planned Interaction

- WALT/WILF/Learning Outcomes
- Concept Mapping
- KWL
- Teacher /Pupil discussions
- Self-assessment (samples stored in teacher's assessment folder)
- Two wishes and a star
- Thumbs up/down
- Traffic Lights
- Dictation

### Assessment Events

- Standardised Tests
- Literacy Assessments
- Checklists
- Writing Rubric for genre writing/ project work
- Spellings Assessment
- Cloze Test
- Reading Assessment

Two approaches to assessment are **AfL**(Assessment for learning) and **AoL** (Assessment of learning). Teachers and children often share information from **AfL** on a daily basis. Children constantly communicate information to teachers. Developing self-assessment skills and regular use of portfolios and learning logs empower children as communicators of assessment information - information to which teachers can respond.

**AoL** is generally communicated through parent/teacher meetings, report cards and staff meetings. Teachers in St. Comán's Wood Primary School interpret assessment information for parents, highlighting how it can be used to improve the child's learning. Likewise, parents can respond to the outcomes of assessment.

## **Test Types**

### **Standardised Testing**

The Drumcondra Primary Reading Test (DPRT), and Drumcondra Primary Maths Test (DPMT) are the standardised tests used in the school given to children at the end of 2nd, 4th and 6th classes. Tests are administered on-line for 4th and 6th classes and the paper format is used with 2nd classes. Standard and Percentile Ranking scores are recorded on Databiz and are readily available to all teachers. The SET analyse results in June for allocation of resources to pupils in September.

### **Ability Testing**

CAT4 is administered to all 3rd classes at the end of September/beginning of October helping teachers to identify a child's strengths in a broad range of areas including verbal/quantitative/non-verbal and spatial reasoning. CAT4 identifies "implications for learning" which is valuable for the teacher. The results will be compared with results in standardised reading and Math's tests to explore whether or not pupils are working at their level.

The Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIATT) is administered to some children who are showing significant, specific need in the area of literacy, where teachers need diagnostic data to better guide them on how to meet the child's needs. Training was delivered by the NEPS psychologist to the SET team on the administration of WIATT in 2023.

### **Screening Tests**

Screening tests are used to facilitate the early identification of pupil's learning strengths/difficulties. In our school ALPACA is administered to Junior and Senior Infants. Screening is used by the school to initiate the staged approach to intervention as per circulars 24/03 and 02/05.

### **Diagnostic Tests**

Formal diagnostic tests are used to determine appropriate learning support for individual pupils. Such tests are administered by the SEN team following referral by the class teachers in consultation with parents/guardians. The administration of such tests is in keeping with the approach recommended by Circular 02/05 where a staged approach is implemented.

[Continuum of Support Process](#) click this link to access information.

### **Analysis of Test Results**

Assessment results are analysed at class level and at school level and are used to select pupils for extra support. Literacy is targeted firstly, followed by numeracy when the literacy needs have been supported. Pupils at/below the 12<sup>th</sup> percentile may be selected for further diagnostic testing or support teaching. Those between the 12th and 20th percentiles are prioritised in the 1st term via station teaching and those below the 12th percentile are prioritised in the 2nd term. Results are

used to inform whole-school planning in literacy and numeracy. They are also used to identify the learning needs of exceptionally able pupils. The outcome of assessments is communicated to pupils, parents, other teachers and to school management. Pupils are involved in assessing their own work from time to time and samples can be found in teacher's assessment folders.

### **Recording of Assessment Data**

The children's work and skills in all curriculum subjects are assessed using a range of strategies - some teacher led, some pupil led. Individual teacher's recorded preparation identifies

1. the specific learning taking place/ learning outcomes shared with the pupils -  
**BEFORE TEACHING/ LEARNING.**
2. the learning experiences/ activities supporting the learning -  
**DURING TEACHING/LEARNING**
3. how children (all/some/a few) in the particular class context will demonstrate this learning. How will teachers know that the children have learned and acquired the knowledge/skills detailed in the learning outcomes? -  
**AFTER TEACHING/LEARNING.**

Planning documentation is seen as evolving - before, during and after teaching and in line with the children's learning. Teachers add notes, amendments and annotations to their documentation to support preparation for teaching and learning.

Teachers when commenting on pupil's progress are constantly aware of the need to record comments in an objective and constructive manner. The electronic files are updated at the end of June by the SET teachers as directed by the SEN co-ordinators, ensuring that the correct files are in relevant class and class level folders. Also teachers ensure that files are colour coded correct in line with the School Continuum of Support guidelines.

### **School Support Documents in St. Comán's wood Primary School**

- Each child has an information and class assessment folder stored in a filing cabinet in each classroom. This folder moves with the child from Junior Infants to 6th class. This file records end of year reports, examples of work, attendance/sick notes etc. Databiz is used for the recording of standardised test results and attendance.
- Each child has an electronic School Support file which is stored on Google Drive and teachers working with the child have access to this file. All teachers are responsible for keeping the on-line 'log of actions' on each child 'up to date'. The log of actions is used to record information on this child from observations (in-class, on the yard and after-school activities), interactions with others, outcome of meetings with parents/external agencies, incidents of behaviour of concern, reports received/sent, correspondence etc. Teachers initial these entries so that staff know who to go to if they need further information, clarification or advice. This 'log of actions' is a record of actions involving the child from Junior Infants to 6th class

### **Reporting to Parents**

Teachers report to parents at least twice yearly. One report is an oral report at Parent/Teacher meetings in November. A written report is sent to all parents in mid-June. Reports of standardised tests are communicated in writing to parents. Scores provided are standardised scores and an agreed NCCA Report template is used. Parents are given the opportunity to seek a meeting with the Principal/class teacher to discuss the written report if necessary.

### **Reporting to Primary/2<sup>nd</sup> level Schools**

A Passport (including the information from standardised tests) must be sent to the relevant primary/secondary school to which a student transfers on proof of enrolment. SEN teachers liaise

with the secondary schools and where necessary a NEPS transfer form is filled in and sent to the school with a copy of the psychological report.

### **Reporting to BOM and DES**

The Principal is required to report annually aggregated assessment data from standardised tests to the BOM in June. The Principal is also required to report aggregate standardised test results to the DES in June for 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> classes.

### **Implementation and Review**

This policy is effective from June 2025 and will be monitored on an on-going basis to ensure practice on the ground reflects what is written herein.

Signed:

19th May, 2025

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Marie Dooley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped 'D' at the end.

Chairman - Board of Management,  
St. Comán's Wood Primary School